

Town of Rockport Finance Committee
Minutes of December 11, 2013 Meeting

Chairman Wally Hess called the meeting to order promptly at 7pm. Present at the meeting were Wally Hess, Frank Hassler, Mike Hughes, Carl Engel, David Coyne, Laurene Wessel, and Bill Wagner (7:40).

First order of business was to approve minutes from November 14th and November 26th. Both were moved and approved unanimously and submitted.

Next orders of business were two reserve requests. The first was \$4000 funding request for FEMA consultants which was moved and approved unanimously. The second was \$11,491 for Rockport's tuition percentage for the North Shore Vocational School District. This was moved and approved unanimously.

Next agenda item was the discussion of the school override. Wally Hess and Frank Hassler met with Superintendent Rob Liebow, who presented them with a budget for FY 2015 of \$12,627,874. Also, the school committee intends to present an override request of \$776,314 to the selectmen on December 17th. Rob Liebow explained to the finance committee that the schools essentially need 3.5% for an annual budget increase to meet the needs of the district. This amount does not include debt service, pension, or health benefits. The override request consists of two components, first to balance the budget for FY 2015, and also to recharge the reserve balance of the district. Wally presented a spreadsheet which extrapolated funding for the town as a whole from the present budget until 2023. This demonstrated how a current rate of 1.75% to the schools from the town, over time would result on 0.2% in 2023 available for the rest of the town departments. He also demonstrated that a rate of 3.5% annually to the schools would result in a growth rate of -2.41% for the other town departments. This would require additional overrides each two to three years in the future. Selectmen Paul Murphy suggested the creation of a joint committee made up of school committee, finance committee, and board of selectmen members to create a solution that can be presented with positive recommendations at the next ATM.

The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.